

Deserted Wives and Children Act 1901, New South Wales

1901 – 1964

URL: <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/pdf/asmade/act-1901-17>

Details

The Deserted Wives and Children Act (17/1901) was 'An Act to consolidate the enactments relating to Deserted Wives and Children.' It was created to ensure men supported their wives and children. Deserting a wife or child was made a criminal offence in the Crimes Act 1900. Initially this Act permitted orders to be made for the support of wives and/or children; an amendment in 1913 permitted the granting of legal custody of children to a wife when an order for support was being made and allowed men imprisoned for failing to pay support to work while in jail. Further amendments were made in 1931, to prevent husbands being imprisoned if they failed to make payments due to unemployment or ill-health. Proceedings under the Act were heard in Children's Courts, and women who needed welfare support had to sue their husbands for maintenance before receiving aid. The Act was amended and updated in 1960 and repealed by the Maintenance Act 1964.

More info

Chronology

- Deserted Wives and Children Act 1840, New South Wales (1840 - 1901)
 - **Deserted Wives and Children Act 1901, New South Wales (1901 – 1964)**

Related Entries

Related Legislation

- [Deserted Wives and Children Act of 1840 as amended by the Act of 1858, New South Wales \(1858 - 1901\)](#)
- [Infant Protection Act 1904, New South Wales \(1904 - 1923\)](#)

The Infant Protection Act replaced the clauses relating to illegitimate children in the Deserted Wives and Children Act 1901

Related Organisations

- [Children's Court of New South Wales \(October 1905 - current\)](#)

Resources

- Weigall, Cecil Edward, *Infants' custody, maintenance & protection acts, (N.S.W.) : being Deserted Wives & Children Act, 1901; Infant Protection Act, 1904; Infants' Custody and Settlements Act, 1899; Infant Convicts' Adoption Act, 1901; Destitute Children's Society Act, 1901; State Children Relief Act, 1901; Children's Protection Act, 1902; and Neglected Children and Juvenile Offenders' Act, 1905, and regulations thereunder,*

1908

- Department of Justice, [History](#), Children's Court of New South Wales, 2012
 - Parliamentary Counsel's Office, [NSW legislation](#), No date
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